

that the compensation taken into account for any employee in determining plan allocations or benefit accruals for any plan year is limited to the annual compensation limit. For purposes of this rule, allocations and benefit accruals under a plan include all benefits provided under the plan, including ancillary benefits.

(2) *Plan-year-by-plan-year requirement.* For purposes of this paragraph (b), the limit in effect for the current plan year applies only to the compensation for that year that is taken into account in determining plan allocations or benefit accruals for the year. The compensation for any prior plan year taken into account in determining an employee's allocations or benefit accruals for the current plan year is subject to the applicable annual compensation limit in effect for that prior year. Thus, increases in the annual compensation limit apply only to compensation taken into account for the plan year in which the increase is effective. In addition, if compensation for any plan year beginning prior to the OBRA '93 effective date is used for determining allocations or benefit accruals in a plan year beginning on or after the OBRA '93 effective date, then the annual compensation limit for that prior year is the annual compensation limit in effect for the first plan year beginning on or after the OBRA '93 effective date (generally \$150,000).

(3) *Application of limit to a plan year—*  
(i) *In general.* For purposes of applying this paragraph (b), the annual compensation limit is applied to the compensation for the plan year on which allocations or benefit accruals are based.

(ii) *Compensation for the plan year.* If a plan determines compensation used in determining allocations or benefit accruals for a plan year based on compensation for the plan year, then the annual compensation limit that applies to the compensation for the plan year is the limit in effect for the calendar year in which the plan year begins. Alternatively, if a plan determines compensation used in determining allocations or benefit accruals for the plan year on the basis of compensation for a 12-consecutive-month period, or periods, ending no later than the last day

of the plan year, then the annual compensation limit applies to compensation for each of those periods based on the annual compensation limit in effect for the respective calendar year in which each 12-month period begins.

(iii) *Compensation for a period of less than 12 months—*(A) *Proration required.* If compensation for a period of less than 12 months is used for a plan year, then the otherwise applicable annual compensation limit is reduced in the same proportion as the reduction in the 12-month period. For example, if a defined benefit plan provides that the accrual for each month in a plan year is separately determined based on the compensation for that month and the plan year accrual is the sum of the accruals for all months, then the annual compensation limit for each month is  $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the annual compensation limit for the plan year. In addition, if the period for determining compensation used in calculating an employee's allocation or accrual for a plan year is a short plan year (i.e., shorter than 12 months), the annual compensation limit is an amount equal to the otherwise applicable annual compensation limit multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of months in the short plan year, and the denominator of which is 12.

(B) *No proration required for participation for less than a full plan year.* Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(3)(iii)(A) of this section, a plan is not treated as using compensation for less than 12 months for a plan year merely because the plan formula provides that the allocation or accrual for each employee is based on compensation for the portion of the plan year during which the employee is a participant in the plan. In addition, no proration is required merely because an employee is covered under a plan for less than a full plan year, provided that allocations or benefit accruals are otherwise determined using compensation for a period of at least 12 months. Finally, notwithstanding paragraph (b)(3)(iii)(A) of this section, no proration is required merely because the amount of elective contributions (within the meaning of § 1.401(k)-1(g)(3)), matching contributions (within the meaning of § 1.401(m)-1(f)(12)), or employee contributions